

*Sierra Front/Northwestern Great Basin  
Resource Advisory Council  
Meeting Minutes  
July 27 & 28, 2000*

**Thursday, July 27, 2000**

Attending

RAC members

Chris Freeman  
Jacques Etcheogoyhen  
Susie Askew  
Gerry Emm  
Jerry Hepworth  
Hugh Judd  
Robert Kautz  
Susan Lynn  
Tina Nappe  
Tebeau Piquet  
Bennie Romero  
Sherman Swanson (PM only)

DRAFT

Absent

John Falen  
Ame Hellman  
Karen Wells

BLM

Terry Reed - Field Manager, Winnemucca  
John Singlaub - Field Manager, Carson City  
Mike Holbert - Associate Field Manager, Winnemucca  
Les Boni - Assistant Field Manager, Winnemucca

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Freeman at 0910.

The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to approve the minutes without any changes by Jaques Etchegoyen and seconded by Bennie Romero. The motion was passed by unanimous vote of members present.

## Field Office Manager reports

Carson City FO- John Singlaub, Field Office Manager

- Oildri clay mine EIS, scoping through 8/21/00, ROD by 6/2001
- Tuscarora gas pipeline, EA to public 9/00, complete 12/00
- Yerrington Mine Update (Handout)
- Mine Closures, Olinghouse to stop funding 8/1/00, surety company to pay after that.
- OHV FOIA request from Nevada Wilderness project, possible lawsuit for BLM's failure to manage ORV's
- National Public Lands Day on 9/23/00 at Silver Saddle Ranch
- Silver Saddle Ranch Plan
- NAS-Fallon lands withdrawal Plan
- Mt. Grant GAO report
- Walker Lake Scoping Period extended
- Emergency Horse Gathers
- Bacca Bill authorized the US to sell land competitively obtain environmentally sensitive lands
- Fire Season up and going no large fires at this time
- Approval by SOI to purchase Casey and Rolling A Ranches
- Aquization priorities for SNLMA- conservation easements
- Lincoln County lands now for sale not for exchange.
- Land Exchanges
- Status of \$9mm for gather of WH and impacts to the resource of not getting the appropriations.
- Elaine Briggs is replacing Carl Kipping

Winnemucca FO- Mike Holbert, Asst. Field Office Manager and Terry Reed, Field Office Manager

(See handout)

S&G Implementation

Spring Creek Evaluation

Pole Creek MUD

Lands

High Sierra Communication

Lake Las Vegas Exchange

S.2773 Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails NCA Act

Wildfire Situation

Recreation Permits

Burning Man

Minerals

Pinson Mining Company

Marigold Mine EIS  
OHV Listening Meetings Fernley Meeting  
Possible LUP effort  
CNIDC moving  
WH&B illegal gathering case conviction

A break was taken at 1030. Reconvened at 1045.

**Motion** by Bennie Romero and seconded by Tina Nappe

The RAC will set aside time at the end of each meeting to summarize what has been accomplished at the meeting. This will include a analysis of the direction, goals, a measurement of effectiveness and feedback from the BLM districts. A RAC member and BLM staff member will be assigned to follow up on the effectiveness of the RAC recommendation and report to the entire RAC at the next meeting. The motion was passed by unanimous vote of members present.

Clean Water Action Plans- Eric Janes, BLM WO and Dan Jacquet, Carson City

A presentation was given and a handout was distributed. Both focused on the CWAP, the watershed approach, key BLM actions and the United Federal Approach.

Adjourned for lunch at 1150. Reconvened at 1305

Great Basin Restoration Initiative- John Singlaub, Carson City FO & Terry Reed, Winnemucca FO

Meetings were held in Reno, Elko and Winnemucca to get public input. The results of these meetings are displayed in the distributed handouts. None of the RAC members attended these meetings. Direction was asked for by the Field Managers. No detailed plans have been developed to date. John distributed a handout of possible projects identified on the Carson City district. Some possible projects identified on the Winnemucca district, are: Oust applications, green stripping and continuing restoration projects in fire rehab areas. A planning update is also needed for the Winnemucca district to initiate projects and provide funding sources. Some projects suggested by the RAC were: study of postfire recreation impacts, green stripping the mouth of canyons or how effective have our fire rehab actions been to date and are we stopping fires on those areas. It was brought up that fire rehab is worthy but that it is reactive and do we want to identify projects that are proactive.

**Motion** - Made by Tebeau Piquet and seconded by Bennie Romero to appoint Sherm Swanson to coordinate with Winnemucca BLM, NRCS and USFS to identify an area to study impacts of restoration management. The motion was passed by unanimous vote of members present.

## Public Comment Period

David Fullstone, Lyon County Commissioner, -Welcomed the RAC to Yerrington and informed the RAC of issues of concern to Lyon County: Walker River water issues, Yerrington mine, and gravel access and availability for projects in the county.

Break at 1410. Reconvened at 1454

## Walker River Basin Water Acquisitions- Dan Jacquet, Carson City FO

Update on the Walker River Basin EIS scoping process and development of implementation tools. A handout outlined issues identified, potential alternatives and future steps to complete the DEIS. Questions from the RAC on specific issues and alternative analysis were addressed by the Carson City district.

Lu Weaver, from the audience, expressed concern about the amount of water that needs to be acquired and that there is a concern as to who would make the decision. John Singlaub said that the decision would probably be made at the DOI level.

Phyllis Hunewil, Lyon County Commissioner asked do we really know how much water is needed in the lake for LCT recovery and shouldn't that be answered before we look at water acquisition.

Adjourned for dinner at 1623. Reconvened at 1909.

## Walker River Basin Water Acquisition Forum- Dan Jacquet, Carson City FO and RAC members

Comments and questions from the public:(Answers from CCFO staff)

How much upstream water is needed?  
(The hydrology studies and alternative selected in the EIS will determine this.)

Will the hydrology studies be reviewed before the draft is released?  
(Peer review will take place.)

There was a concern that original EIS schedule was too aggressive and that there was not enough time for public input and review and that Public Resource Associates is conducting the hydrology study when they are an advocate of filling the lake.

All elements of the watershed need to be looked at as a whole. No blame should be placed on a single element.

How will the tax base be replaced if agricultural lands are replaced?  
(No answer)

There needs to be an explanation of water rights and impacts of alternatives explained in DEIS.

If the threshold of 10-14,000 TDS can't be attained would PRA be willing to sacrifice LCT in Walker Lake to protect agriculture in the Walker Valley.

(Susan Lynn couldn't answer that)

Jerry Hepworth stated that an aggressive dynamic model validation process must be committed to.

Other western areas have developed water conservation measures that may not be initiated in this area. Have these measures been analyzed as alternatives in the DEIS.

Sherm Swanson asked how has the Walker River channel, riparian area and floodplain changed and how is it expected to change with each of the alternatives.

Will the DRI hydrology values be used used ? Are they still valid and will water transfer efficiency values be included?.T

(The most accurate data will be used.)

Why aren't California interests of the Walker River Basin represented on the RAC?

(They are not within the jurisdictional boundaries of this RAC, the Carson City and Winnemucca Districts)

What would be the cost of desalination?

(\$1000-2000 per acre-foot. It would not be feasible because of water loss and brine disposal problems)

Adjourned for the evening at 2030.

**Friday, July 28, 2000**

Attending

RAC members

Chris Freeman  
Bennie Romero  
Gerry Emm  
Jerry Hepworth  
Susan Lynn  
Robert Kautz  
Tebeau Piquet  
Tina Nappe  
Hugh Judd  
Ame Hellman(AM only)  
Sherman Swanson

Absent

John Falen  
Karen Wells  
Jacques Etcheogoyhen  
Susie Askew

DRAFT

BLM

Terry Reed     Field Manager, Winnemucca  
John Singlaub Field Manager, Carson City  
Mike Holbert Asst.Field Manager, Winnemucca  
Les Boni Assoc. Field Manager, Winnemucca

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Freeman at 0808.

RAC Debrief from Walker River Basin Forum-John Singlaub, Carson City Field Office Manager

The water rights for the river would best be held by the tribe or the state instead of the federal government.

We need to look at the physics, biology, and values of the whole system and what degradation has occurred in the system already and can we rehabilitate the system.

We need to not only focus on water for LCT recovery in the system but also the water for the tribe in the EIS.

If unappropriated waters are claimed does that supercede the “new lands” free water.  
We need to recognize the traditional use of the waters in light of legal uses.

Develop a list of the “new lands”and an explanation of that system.

Provide a definition of core agriculture using LESA.

Will we be looking at future development, development rights purchases, allowing the river to reclaim its floodplain?

Subsequent parceling is a challenge for local government, what will happen to the lands if water is stripped?

We need to get to peoples real interests, and get them past their positions.

With the shifts to higher value crops. Perhaps a mechanism for mitigating economic impacts to use higher value, lower water-use crops to maintain agricultural economy to county while lands are taken out of production with water.

A need to commit to the use of NEPA as the decision making tool and a commitment to monitor the water models that are used. Overall need to recognize need for adaptive decision making. A need to keep the process a dynamic one.

A need to look at the possibility of helping rural communities that may lose as a result of the actions of the decision for this project and work with the communities to help them mitigate losses of tax revenues, etc.

A need to look at the full ecosystem including waterfowl and the economics of Mineral County.

Encourage the BLM to continue to work with local governments and communities to develop a vision.

Focus on getting the water to Weber Dam, then design a system to deliver it beyond that.

Make sure a through analysis of the nature of all water rights involved. What will be the impacts of the domestic wells? Ground water is a critical component of this process.

Need to get as much data as possible from the state engineer.

Break at 0905. Reconvened 0920

Black Rock Management Plan- Les Boni, Winnemucca Associate Field Office Manager

It was explained that the Draft EIS is at the printer. The RAC should have received the DEIS in the mail. Public meetings will be held in Sacramento, Reno, Gerlach, Lovelock

and Susanville along with consultation with Native American Tribes. The preferred alternative was reviewed. Concerns and questions from the RAC on the DEIS include:

- How will competing large scale events be dealt with.
- Mechanism for conducting the cultural inventories of the dune area.
- User fees.
- Visitor center.
- Camping time restriction enforcement.
- No geothermal leasing in Soldier Meadows ACEC.
- Need for 35,000 acre ACEC.
- LAC study protocols.

Break at 1046. Reconvened at 1104

#### Public Comment on Black Rock Management Plan-

- Concern with Fee Demo proposal.
- Concern with geothermal leasing restrictions.
- Concern with consultation with only limited members of the mineral industry.
- Concern with change from no surface occupancy to no leasing of geothermal resources.
- Concern with designated routes and RAC participation and ability to comment on the plan
- Concern with closure of some roads not identified in the plan.
- Concern with Burning Man impacts on a new area and have impact studies on the area been conducted
- Concern with Native American contacts.
- Where is the Cedarville BLM in their planning effort and how will the two plans dovetail?



RAC comments:

General Comment-The team is to be commended for the quality of the document. It is much improved over the previous document.

Tebeau Piquet-Concern with increase in ACEC expansion and OHV restrictions.

Jerry Hepworth-Concerns with fee demo, VRM, geothermal analysis and need for more road identification.

Tina Nappe- What does the RAC do with the draft and should this RAC take action or should it be left to the new RAC to address.

Terry would really like feedback after the comment period. Nov. 17 as a tentative meeting date with Dec. 4 as a follow up. The meeting would be information and action with a possible public workshop. At the end of Sept. will get out a tentative summary of comments and plan the meeting agenda and format.

Request to sign letter to Sen. Reid on support of Horse Initiative and follow for members to contact constituents to contact congressional representatives.

Adjourned for lunch at 1200. Reconvened at 1315.

Washoe County Open Space Plan- Terry Knutson, Carson City FO & Bill Whitney, Washoe County

Two handouts were distributed and a presentation was given on the Southern Washoe County Urban Interface Plan Amendment and Environmental Assessment. The RAC and public comments and questions were addressed. Specific concerns included: riparian and floodplain protection, OHV/ACEC buffers, and quarry expansion.

National Off-Highway Vehicle(OHV) Strategy- Terry Knight & Rich Conrad, Carson City FO

The national/state power point presentation was given. This is the presentation that will be used at the listening workshops conducted by the Carson City and Winnemucca districts. Copies of the mailer were distributed to the RAC and public in attendance. The floor was opened for questions and comments from the RAC and public. Specific comments and concerns:

- education is of the utmost importance and what educational process are now in effect.
- collaborative process is the only way to go.
- agency leadership is mandatory.
- we need a longer comment period.
- more public exposure to the process is needed.

- the process will provide the agency a “toolbox” to address the issue and not a final policy document.
- road access vs cross-country travel.

Motion by Tebeau Piquet and seconded by Jerry Hepworth to extend the comment period for an extra 60 days for a total of 90 days on Managing OHV's on BLM-administered public lands

The RAC wished to thank the members whose RAC terms are up; Chris Freeman, Susan Lynn and Karen Wells; for their service.

Feedback on RAC Accomplishments      Chairmanship was seeded to Tina Nappe

- RAC letter to Senator Reid and follow-up with constituents in reference to support of the national wild horse strategy.
- Sherm Swanson will identify a study plot for Great Basin Restoration Initiative.
- The RAC needs to obtain a copy of the water decree for the Walker River.
- The RAC will write a support letter to John Singlaub stating RAC backing the need for Lyon County planning.
- RAC motion to extend OHV comment period for tool box development.
- Include letter to new RAC members at Oct RAC meeting informing them about the Black Rock Meeting on Nov. 17 or Dec. 4.

Next Meeting- Oct 26 and 27, in Mesquite,NV

Potential agenda items

Black Rock

OHV

Funding for the National Wild Horse Strategy

Adjourned at 1600

**DRAFT**